



## History of Hunter Education

The hunter safety program began in the 1940s, following World War II. As veterans returned from the war, more and more people went afield to hunt. This led to an increased number of hunting accidents, which prompted the development of the first hunter safety program.

Missouri's first formal hunter safety training was created in 1957 as a voluntary course. In the early 1970s, in an attempt to meet the changing needs of hunters, the hunter safety course was expanded and became the Hunter Education Program.

The new program addressed hunting issues, such as the destruction of wildlife habitat, a growing anti-hunting attitude, and the increased closure of private lands, along with wildlife management, hunter responsibilities and the basics of safe firearms handling. Between 1957 and 1987, more than 400,000 Missourians voluntarily attended Missouri Hunter Education courses.

In 1988, Missouri enacted a mandatory hunter education requirement for all firearms hunters born on or after January 1, 1967. This regulation marked the beginning of a new era in Missouri's Hunter Education Program. In 1993, certification was limited to people 11 years of age or older. In 2006, the one-millionth student earned hunter education certification.

## For More Information

Trained volunteers and Conservation Department employees teach Missouri's hunter and bowhunter education courses. The courses are offered statewide at various times throughout the year.

Volunteer instructors are dedicated, concerned citizens who sacrifice their time to train new and prospective hunters. They realize hunter education is an important key to the future of hunting.

To find out when and where a course will be scheduled in your area, or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer instructor, contact an outdoor skills specialist at the nearest regional office, or go online at [www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/huntered/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/huntered/).

### Conservation Department Regional Offices

**CENTRAL**  
1907 Hillcrest Drive  
Columbia, MO 65201  
573/884-6861

**KANSAS CITY**  
3424 N.W. Duncan Rd.  
Blue Springs, MO 64015  
816/655-6250

**NORTHEAST**  
3500 S. Baltimore  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
660/785-2420

**NORTHWEST**  
701 James McCarthy Drive  
St. Joseph, MO 64507  
816/271-3100

**OZARK**  
551 Joe Jones Blvd.  
West Plains, MO 65775  
417/256-7161

**SOUTHEAST**  
2302 County Park Drive  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
573/290-5730

**SOUTHWEST**  
2630 N. Mayfair  
Springfield, MO 65803  
417/895-6880

**ST. LOUIS**  
2360 Hwy. D  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
636/441-4554

### MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

P.O. Box 180  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180  
[www.missouriconservation.org](http://www.missouriconservation.org)

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

HED025 4/07, revised 9/09

# MISSOURI HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM



*Over 50 years of teaching proper  
handling of bows and firearms  
has resulted in safer trips afield  
for today's hunters.*



*Serving nature and you*





## Missouri's Hunter Education Program

Missouri's Hunter Education Program is not just for kids and not just for hunters. Anyone who enjoys the outdoors and has an interest in conservation will benefit from hunter education. The program is also an excellent refresher for veteran hunters. The course attempts to develop hunters who are:

- safe with firearms in the field and at home
- respectful of other people and property
- law-abiding
- aware that hunting is a wildlife management tool

Missouri offers two ways to become hunter-education certified—through a traditional classroom course or an online program.

### Traditional Hunter Education Course

In the traditional hunter education course, students will receive a minimum of 10 hours of classroom training, plus additional time for testing and discussion. The course is usually taught in two or three sessions. Topics covered include:

- hunter responsibility and ethics
- firearms safety, operation and handling
- wildlife identification, management and conservation
- hunting techniques and game care
- survival and first aid
- laws and regulations unique to Missouri

### Online Hunter Education Course

The online hunter education course allows individuals to progress through the same material as the traditional course, but at their own pace, from any computer without any special software required. Individuals can study, take chapter reviews and practice tests for free, then must pass an online test. Students must pay a fee to receive their test results. Upon passing the test, students are required to attend a 5-hour field day to complete their certification. The field day provides hands-on practice and reviews the concepts learned online. For more information, visit [www.hunter-ed.com/mo](http://www.hunter-ed.com/mo).

## Who is Required to Take Hunter Education?

Every hunter born on or after January 1, 1967, must have completed an approved hunter education program in Missouri or another state unless:

- They are age 15 or younger and hunting in the immediate presence of a properly licensed adult age 18 or older who is hunter-education certified or born before January 1, 1967.
- They possess an Apprentice Hunter Authorization. This authorization allows hunters age 16 and older to hunt with firearms as long as they possess the proper hunting permits and hunt in the immediate presence of a properly licensed adult mentor age 18 or older who is hunter-education certified or born before January 1, 1967. The Apprentice Hunter Authorization can be purchased for no more than two years.
- They are qualifying landowners or lessees hunting on their own land, except when they are acting as the adult for age 15 and younger youth or a mentor for an Apprentice Hunter as listed above.

Hunter education courses are developed for motivated students age 14 and older who have good reading and comprehension skills and some knowledge of firearms and hunting. However, students 11 years old and older may be tested and certified. Students of any age are encouraged to visit the online hunter education course to review course materials, answer review questions and take practice tests for free before taking the full course.

Those who successfully complete either the traditional or online course receive a Missouri Heritage Card with their personal hunter education number on it. This certification fulfills the mandatory hunter education requirement in Missouri and every other state, as well as Canada and Mexico. Hunter education certification lasts for life and does not have to be repeated.

## Bowhunter Education

Although bowhunter education is voluntary in Missouri, trained volunteers and Missouri Department of Conservation employees conduct valuable and interesting bowhunter education courses. These courses fulfill the requirement of states that have a mandatory bowhunter education requirement and several cities in Missouri that require this certification to participate in urban hunts. This certification also is accepted in Canada and Mexico.

Missouri's bowhunter education courses are developed for motivated students age 14 and older who have good reading and comprehension skills and some bowhunting knowledge. However, students 11 years old and older may be tested and certified.

### Primary Safety Rules For Firearm Hunting

- Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
- Always positively identify your target and what is beyond it before firing.
- Always keep your safety on until ready to shoot.
- Always keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot.



*ONE-MILLIONTH* hunter education student Sam Enright with his instructor Kevin Dixon.

